

December 19, 1978
volume 2, number 11

Registered for posting as a publication (Category B)

• • • • •

Just how much sense does a story like this make? How viable is the argument that a fan would deliberately 'spread around' a lie which can be refuted so easily? It doesn't make sense at all, unless you are particularly paranoid, which may be the problem of some of the Sydney fannies. The paranoia theory gets some support from the selective vision of the part of Sydney fandom to whom this paragraph is directed. If Melbourne fandom truly conspires against Sydney fandom, why do I spend so much time in this fanzine rubbishing Bruce Gillespie, Roger Weddall, Christine Ashby, and Paul Stevens, just to name a few?

CHUNDER! volume 2, number 11, December 19, 1978: page 2

Line for line, 'attacks' on 'Melbourne fandom outweigh those on 'Sydney fandom' in these pages, so far as I am aware. (I'm not going to count pages, however - the paranoids will do that for me anyway.)

Now later in this issue we have some displays of fisticuffs with respect to DUFF and the DITMARS. To the general reader this material may be boring, or even offensive. To me, however, it seems clear that these discussions about the way Australian fandom operates are much better conducted in the open, than in the shadows of letters or particular small-circulation apazines. I am sensitive to your views, however, and if you don't want to spend your time reading about the latest string of adjectives some Melbourne fan is applying to a Sydney fan (or vice versa - or perhaps even the innocent editor) please tell me - and provide other material.

And as for the guys slinging mud - well, it has long been my principle to send any comments I may publish in a fanzine to the object of those remarks: if you could do something like that, maybe none of this would ever get started.

The next CHUNDER! is due on January 9, 1979. However, I shall take a break of a week, and produce the next on Tuesday, January 16. The cough which has been plaguing me for some time is now much abated, and this should lead to a reduction in the number of typos in Chunder!: you've no idea how hard it is to concentrate on typing when, at any moment, you may throw the contents of your lungs over whatever is handy!

1978 - THE YEAR IN REVIEW

The main events of 1978, from where I sit, would seem to have been UNICON IV, the death of FANEW SLETTER, the founding and growth of APPLESAUCE and the temporary (?) folding of THE NOVA MOB. The latest event is described separately in a story in this issue, but I would like to devote a paragraph to each of the earlier events.

UNICON IV was the biggest thing since AUSSIECON. In some ways what happened at UNICON IV have been misunderstood, with some fans feeling that too many things went wrong. No one is likely to say that nothing went wrong, but there is a significant chance that the good side of UNICON IV will be overlooked. UNICON IV became a national convention not through the desires of those organising it, but as a result of the well-intentioned efforts of others. Unfortunately running a national con adds a substantial load to a committee - and the previous experience of a committee doesn't count. The result of all this was an overburdened committee which didn't pick up every little problem in advance. But a second result was a large convention which pleased a very large number of fans.

THE DEATH OF FANEW SLETTER was to me the most unfortunate outcome of UNICON IV. In Fanew Sletter Leigh "dmonds had been somewhat critical of the organisation of UNICON IV, and as more and more of Leigh's fears proved correct, more and more people came to blame Leigh for what happened. If the bearer of bad tidings is to be rubbed out, then the production of newszines is not very rewarding, and after what seems a lifetime Leigh quit publishing FNS, with issue 99. ETHERLINE, the old MSFC newszine, lasted just beyond the hundredth, so Leigh just missed a record. A direct consequence of Leigh's dropping FNS was that this rag started to appear.

APPLESAUCE was founded early this year as a monthly apa (Sydney-based) and after a slow start has taken off in ways which are difficult to describe. I suspect that it is largely because few Sydney fans publish anything outside APPLESAUCE that the outsiders are interested, but in addition some of these Sydney writers are witty, amusing, etc. It will be interesting to watch the development of APPLESAUCE in 1979 as it grows towards a proposed upper limit of 50 members. APPLESAUCE should be further discussed later in this issue. And now the news.....

NOOZ

SECRET MASTERS ANNUAL MEETING - NOVA MOB FOLDS - TERRY CARR TO VISIT
ADELAIDE AND MELBOURNE

Melbourne: The 1978 annual meeting of the Secret Masters of Australian Fandom was recently held at an undisclosed location in Melbourne. It was decided that while the first stage of the takeover of Sydney fandom, through the efforts of Brother Handfield, had been reasonably successful a further and greater effort was required if the AUSTRALIA IN '83 bid was to be effectively sabotaged. Brother Johnson was accordingly ordered to report to Sydney early in 1979 to work under instruction from Brother Handfield. An interim report is to be presented in Melbourne next Easter.

Brighton: The decline in attendance at Nova Mob meetings, very obvious in the latter half of 1978, reached a nadir at the December meeting when the speakers were joined by only four fans. While Bruce Gillespie and Rob Gerrand spoke impressively on Brian Aldiss, and the discussion was as usual, it was felt that holding meetings in 1979 was not justified while interest in the Nova Mob continued at the present level. The previous incarnation of the Nova Mob last less than a year, so this four year stint is a distinct improvement. It is planned that meetings will resume if ever anyone shows any interest in discussing science fiction.

Berkeley: Terry Carr, one of the leaders of the next SF-writing workshop, will pay a flying visit to Adelaide and Melbourne in late January. Full details will be given in the next Chunder!, but interested persons could contact Allan Bray in Adelaide and/or Mervyn Binns in Melbourne.

Hobart: Two fan gatherings in one week! Hobart fandom may never recover. Don Tuck had a few friends over for the evening on Wednesday, 29

November: topics discussed were SF and stamp collecting. Hobart STAR TREK Club men on Saturday December 2 to celebrate the first anniversary of the club's formation and distribute the latest issue of the club's 'zine USS ULTIMUS (edited this month by Kay Bott and - ahem - Mike O'Brien). Next meeting set for last Saturday in January. (M O'B)

Sydney: The SSFF Christmas Party was held at 29 Moira Crescent, Randwick on Saturday 2nd December, starting at around 8 pm.

I (EBL) understand that it commenced (unofficially) at about 2 pm, however I was at my place typing up my political fanzine 'Bruce E Harper', and waiting for Ken, Marea & Alex to do their APPLESAUCE contributions, so the bunch of us did not get there until 9 pm.

There appeared to be about three dozen people watching the first of the three movies shown, and others were busy with APPLESAUCE, which on mailing 7 reached a record 127 pages.

There was minor discussion of doing a Ditmar 'zine (Peter Toluzzi will probably do it, but that is not a final decision), of doing an AUSTRALIA IN '83 'zine, and of SYNCON '79, but most of the affair was just fun for the participants. Broke up about 2 am.

(The Keith Curtis auction raised \$36.85, which I've just sent to Leigh for GUFF.) (EBL)

++++
THE GREAT DUFF DEBATE - PART THE UMPTEENTH

++++
If you find the great DUFF debate boring, turn over a few pages to the great Ditmar debate. If you want to keep up with DUFF, but can't tell the players apart, just remember that I, John Foyster, am the guy with the white hat, and almost all the other people are wearing black hats. Anything to help you. And now, let's start off with a couple of letters from the previous administrators of DUFF.

Leigh Edmonds

With Valma and I living in a back street of a suburb to the north of the centre of Melbourne it is understandable that nothing fannishly exciting enough to stir the blood happens here - which is as it should be. We occasionally send up the periscope to see what's going on and we still average a fanzine a day in the letter box, but we lead a quiet and somewhat contemplative life in our cluttered establishment. Last weekend Christine Ashby called in for a while and we swapped gossip; later John Foyster and Jenny Bryce arrived, consumed food, talked and played with wooden building blocks until John declared it was past his bedtime and they went home. After that bout of excitement we collapsed from exhaustion - we decided we're out of practice.

Valma has just about recovered from another hectic and traumatic year at college - only one more to go! I, on the other hand, have for the last month or so been making plastic model aeroplanes for the annual International Plastic Modellers Society Australasian National Competition. Valma comes and looks at me doing delicate things to bits of plastic under a magnifying glass and bright light and declares I'd make a fortune as a jeweller. I reply that there isn't a category in the competition for plastic jewellery. One model I did enter was of a Convair F-106 which is truly a beautiful machine - 'looks as if it's doing Mach 2 while it's standing on the ground' as somebody has said. Unfortunately my model didn't do justice to the original. It did however bring in a couple of minor placings and net me free a thumping great kit of a railway gun that looks as though it could take six months to put together properly and make tatters of my fanac. Fortunately railway guns are not one of my passions so we may produce a few fanzines next year.

So much for gossip.

We were extremely relieved to see AUSTRALIA IN '83 - A STATEMENT with the previous Chunder! - at last there is something ordinary Australian fans can clutch at in the belief that there actually is a bid. Although the '83 bid may have been progressing by leaps and bounds, news of the activity has so far been effectively smothered by the blanket on communications that seems to cover Sydney. This is a good first step; if Sydney fandom can keep this up they may yet find the rest of Australian fandom falling in behind them and lending active support instead of uninformed apathy. Despite all the plans for flyers and ads in convention programme books we think the real key to winning the bid is (as it was for us in the early '70s and for British fans in the mid 70s) a flood of fanzines and other easily visible fanac leading Australia to all fannish parts. People have to be induced to vote, and an ad or two and a bit of paper handed to them are no substitute for fannish goodwill carefully generated over a long period. And this brings us to a matter currently occupying space in Chunder!

There are currently no fans in Australia active enough to deserve to to win DUFF.

It appears to us that we all need to look at what DUFF stands for and what the obligations of a DUFF winner are. We feel that DUFF is on a decline and since it is a fact that we are scraping to come up with an Australian candidate who deserves to win, it is best to let it sit a while until we have enough good nominees to make it worthwhile.

To us a nominee should be a fan who is active and not only active in Australia but active in America. This fannish activity should not commence as a consequence of becoming a DUFF candidate; rather, standing for DUFF should occur as a consequence of being an active fan. There are many American 'apas one can join in order to get to know Americans and many fanzines to be had if one is putting out a fanzine or one's own, or making contributions or LoCing.

When we went over in 1974 we had already established many contacts and made many friends there. People knew who we were and offered us places to stay. We felt it was our obligation to see as many fans as possible and if we got to see touristy things as well that was a bonus but the trip was not a free fare to see the Grand Canyon and Disneyland. It concerns us that this may be what it is turning into - and if it does we for two won't be supporting it.

We are quite willing to go on about this at some length. However, as the GUFF administrator I (Leigh Edmonds) would like to conclude with a statement that I'm quite willing to take suggestions about the conduct of GUFF from Sydney fans any time they care to prove to me that they care about it. GUFF currently has almost \$300 here in Australia with donations from Adelaide, Brisbane and Melbourne. But there is no money from any Sydney fans and yet they are the people with the most helpful advice in just about any area of fandom these days.

(LATE NEWS FLASH!

LEIGH EDMONDS PREPARED TO ACCEPT ADVICE ON GUFF FROM SYDNEY!

'Leigh Edmonds received, late last week, a cheque for \$30, the proceeds of an auction held at the Sydney SF Foundation Xmas meeting.' (LE)

Readers may recall, however, that Eric Lindsay's report on page 3 of this issue refers to a sum of \$36.85. Ho hum.) (1)

Christine Ashby

You'll do anything to get a loc, won't you? I think that your sense of humour may be just a little too rarified for general consumption - those of your readers who don't know me personally may have some trouble seeing the humour in your remark about a 'conspiracy of silence'. For myself, I can only say that you have chosen an extremely indirect way of hinting to me that I ought to commit to print the True Story of the last DUFF campaign.

Silence there was, I suppose, in the sense that I felt I was shouting in a vacuum. At the Melbourne Rotslercon, which was surprisingly well-attended by interstate fans, I publicly opened nominations, and gave a little speech about the rules, such as they are. Subsequently I circulated a call for nominations and a resume of the rules through FANEW SLETTER. Silence. (2)

I agree with you that candidates for DUFF ought to be known and active fans, of the fanzine and/or convention-going variety. In my innocence I reasoned that all such people would be reached by a combination of word-of-mouth and FANEW SLETTER. At the very least you would think that the thought of a free trip to America would move people to write to the Administrator for further details. (Anyone who couldn't name the Administrator obviously being unsuitable prima facie as a candidate.)

The silence was deafening. At one point some nong said to me 'you can't close the nominations - you haven't opened them yet'. Paul Stevens organized his nomination, which only made matters worse. You can't have a one-horse race. I spent some time with fans of Substance going over all the even remotely eligible fans, and approaches were unsuccessfully made to several.

As my original deadline approached, I found myself with Paul Stevens, Keith Taylor, and a collection of rumours. An Adelaide fan had nominated and then withdrawn, having in any case not done much about complying with the rules (which I had clearly set out in a letter to his chief nominator). In desperation I wrote a form letter to all the people who were rumoured ever to have been interested, setting out the rules, extending the deadline a month, and offering to help fix them up with American nominators. (This last was to prevent what happened anyway - everybody, with no time to spare, approached Susan Wood!)

By bending the rules slightly (accepting telephonic assurances that the necessary documentation was coming) I finally assembled my little band of hopefuls. If the record number of votes is anything to go by, there was nothing wrong with dissemination of information or of ballots. Even Sydney fans showed a bit of interest (well, more than they showed the previous year anyway).

At the close of voting I promptly put out an Administrator's report, and distributed it the same way I distributed the ballots. I believe that one person to whom I sent a bundle of reports sat on them, but that was hardly within my control.

I do wish you had offered to sack me this time last year. How gladly I would have accepted! (3)

As to what looks like becoming a row over GUFF/DUFF and the good old Sydney/Melbourne thing, I'm not buying into it other than to say that I agree heartily with Leigh Edmonds, who assures me that he will be going into print on the subject. The whole question of the powers and direction of the DUFF Administrators is very ticklish. At the moment I would say that the Administrator has absolute discretion, subject only to public pressure - if DUFF were to be institutionalised, as almost no other fannish undertaking (save the Foundation) ever is, who then would be willing to administer it? Not the people who have lately expressed such strong views on the subject, I'll bet.

Before embarking on this Eastercon madness, we (Derrick and I) agreed that Derrick had a thick skin. So have I, in consequence of which I am willing to pass over your rather touching male chauvinism. In any case, which kicked, I bite. (4)

Finally, may I exhort everyone out there to join Eastercon?

(Editorial Intrusion: before we go on to the rest of this DUFF madness, there are a couple of (numbered) points I would like to catch up upon.

(1) The discrepancy between Eric Lindsay's \$36.85 and Leigh Edmonds' \$30 is easily explained. Leigh received two cheques, one for \$30 signed EBL, and a second from another feller (unidentifiable) with the balance, and a note from Eric saying that he enclosed some money for GUFF and more was to follow: Leigh didn't realise that the other cheque was (apparently) what was to follow, and was wondering why Eric hadn't explained the second cheque.

(2) Christine Ashby and the dissemination of the rules through FANEW SLETTER. I am very open to correction in this matter, especially since when the activity referred to took place (August-October '77) I was mostly out of Victoria and not looking too closely at my mail, but I am able to identify in the FANEW SLETTER file only the notice of the extension of the deadline to the end of November. If that is all there was, I can understand the poor nong's belief that you hadn't opened nominations.

(3) I did not offer to sack you or anyone else in the previous issue of Chunder!

(4) My skin is not so thick as yours: please either substantiate your reference to my 'male chauvinism' or withdraw the suggestion.

And now on to some edited comments on DUFF from others. I shall try to eliminate material which is boringly repetitive.)

Irwin Hirsh

I must say that I was most distressed with the news that DUFF would be operating to bring a North American fan to SYNCON '79. I thought (and still think) that the suspension of DUFF for one year was a good idea. Firstly it would let us solely concentrate on GUFF till at least the closing date for GUFF votes. But secondly, I saw it as a step forward in having one world-wide fan fund, as it would have been possible for the GUFF winner to travel on to North America.

I got the impression from the latest APPLESAUCE mailing (admittedly only two people) that they saw the suspension of DUFF as 'Melbourne fandom's way of wrecking SYNCON '79' (or something like that). Well, I couldn't see how, as for one thing, the SYNCON committee couldn't use the DUFF winner's name as a great deal of advertising to get the 'man in the street' into the con. The SYNCON com. should try to get some American fans who are going to SEACON to spend a bit more money and go to Britain via Australia, instead of asking Paul and Bill to run a very rushed DUFF campaign (I am presuming that American fandom knew of the decision to suspend DUFF before we did, and had accepted it, and were planning accordingly.).

Shayne McCormack

The Down Under Fan Fund was a fine charity instituted to give some few of our fan friends a good time, and to promote fan friendship between us and the U.S. This Fund is entirely financed by the generosity of fans in both countries (yes, I know you have heard this before, but be patient...) I think I can speak with authority on the subject, having been a Co-ordinator myself. (I've never won it, you understand, just co-ordinated it) A number of Australians have always worked very hard to raise the necessary cash, one of the most prominent being Keith Curtis who has never, to my knowledge, been publicly thanked for his efforts, nor has he ever run in the competition. He does not do this to be thanked, to be pointed out as a philanthropist, but simply because he believes in the Fund. Like their brothers and sisters in Melbourne, Sydney fans have contributed much time and money to the Fund over the years. No one in Sydney believes that the location of the fan winning or running makes any difference ... geographic placing is irrelevant - it is whether or not the fan is worthy of winning that counts.

(JF interrupts: Shayne, if Keith Curtis has never been publicly thanked for his efforts that is the fault of the Co-ordinators/Administrators. Leigh Edmonds and I published the names of donors: did you? Did Christine Ashby?) *

Paul, you say you had 'talked to lots of fans about it and no one had thought the idea was wrong'. Well, it's not wrong to make a suggestion regarding DUFF, but Paul, you are the Co-ordinator (or one of them) of the Fund, and should you wish to change the Fund so drastically, why did you not print the suggestion widely, either in a newsletter or a DUFF fanzine, asking for opinions and votes on the matter? The fans who vote and pay into DUFF are the ones with the say as to what should or should not be done.

(JF interrupts: Hold it right there. Since recent DUFF administrators have not bothered to publish lists of donors, that information is not public. How do you know, Shayne, that Paul didn't contact a fair random sample of voters? But this is beside the point: it has never been the case (not even the tradition) that DUFF Administrators run around polling the fan population on every decision, and it isn't that way for TAFF either. Try being realistic with the suggestions as to how other people should run their business.)

I don't give half a poe if there are no rules ... certain things are honestly obvious even without rules. Certainly Sydney fans would be upset at losing a Special Fan Guest, the DUFF Winner. As a good proportion of the money comes from Sydney fans, they have a right to their opinion. And let's not forget tradition (remember that, it means a lot to fans ... 'traditionally, you don't announce GOHs'). ((JF: A fine old tradition indeed -and since the SYNCON '79 committee ignored it, how is/was anyone to know which other traditions they planned to ignore??)) Traditionally, the DUFF winner has always attended the major Convention held during the year of his/her trip, and his/her trip has always been planned to coincide with that major Convention. Why did Sydney not communicate its desires/thoughts re DUFF? Possibly because we never even dreamed that anyone would think of anything else happening.

*Christine Ashby's '77-78 report specifically acknowledges Keith's work.

CHUNDER! volume 2, number 11, December 19, 1978: page 8

We were simply waiting for the DUFF Co-ordinator to get off his/their bums and do what they were supposed to do - contact us. To tell us what was going on, what we were supposed to do, room bookings and times etc. No information came from Sydney, Paul? I might ask, what information came from Melbourne?

(JF interrupts again: A good question, and one deserving of an answer. Chunder! 1, May 16, 1978, page 4, announced Paul Stevens as the DUFF winner. That issue of Chunder! certainly didn't go directly to the SYNCON '79 committee (how could it? Not until October was a name and address associated with the bid) but maybe a few fans in Sydney had figured out that Paul was the winner. His address is well-known. On the other hand, the people who wanted the DUFF winner, who are running this very wonderful convention in August next year, sat back, at least by Shayne McCormack's admission, and waited. This is not an administrative style which has proved terribly successful in other fields of endeavour. And, on the other hand, as I have said several times without significant denial, SYNCON '79 didn't have an address, or any person named as a contact in publicity. Even as recently as last month Peter Toluzzi wrote to me that 'no one here seems to have decided which is the official contact point for which committee'. He went on to name three possible addresses (one of them new to me).

Paul may be at fault in not having written to half a dozen people in Sydney in the hope that one of them would be able to speak authoritatively for SYNCON '79, but the SYNCON Committee knew exactly to whom they should write and, you assert now, what they wanted.

What the SYNCON Committee didn't do was think - and there's still evidence of this in the bottom lines of Shayne's letter on the previous page. In amongst all the talk of traditions and what everyone expected and how no one dreamed of anything else is a very large hole. DUFF was started in '72, and DUFF winners traditionally attend, not just the major Convention - as Shayne suggests - but the major Convention in Australia and the World Convention in the United States. (In '75 it was AUSSIECON and the North American Con.) Staggering as the thought may be to Sydney fans, this scenario breaks down for 1979, since the World Convention is in England, which meant that a '79 DUFF winner would not go to a WORLDCON in the traditional way. That's what Paul sought to discuss with fans, and he did so in Melbourne and, I believe, at BAYCON (my reports of that convention mention no names of Sydney fans in connexion with that con). The issue is a complex one, not easy to discuss via letter, and complicated by the existence of GUFF (announced long before Paul won this year's DUFF). Paul's travel plans didn't allow him to attend the '78 SYNCON. Now perhaps the Sydney fans will argue that Paul should have attended - and I certainly think that would have avoided this little unpleasantness - but haven't we now argued ourselves around to the peculiar position in which those seeking the benefit not only don't have to bother to contact the benefactor, but require the benefactor to travel 800 kilometres to find out what they want? In the absence of an enquiry, perhaps an unjustified expenditure. (And for the benefit of non-DUFF winners I ought to point out that winning DUFF is most expensive for the winner...)

And now let's turn aside from the trivia and get on with serious matters.)

(SMcC resumes)

Also, let me state now my disagreement with your arbitrary fashion of : setting DUFF eligibility rules without asking for opinions from the voting fans first. Should this practice continue, I personally will not be supporting DUFF in the future, as I have a dislike of dictatory conditions. I don't believe DUFF was instituted to give a needy fan a free trip - I believe it was created for better reasons than that - to promote US-Aus ties, and to reward a fan who has worked well and

unselfishly for fandom. Also, it's a kind of popularity poll since you always tend to vote for the person you like most - we would all like to see our friends happy. I will never run in a DUFF race again: I decided this some months ago on my own (and I only ran in the last one because Paul was) - but I fail to see why previous travel should bar a fan from being nominated. In the end, it should be a matter of voters' free and democratic choice - if they believe a fan should not win, they will voice their belief in the fairest of ways - by not voting for that fan.

(JF: I am in general agreement with the latter half of Shayne's last paragraph.)

(JF: No, I can't resist it: Shayne didn't included her address with her letter - is this a Sydney habit?)

Ken Ozanne

In reply to Paul Stevens, let me say that he should have known (because I told him) that I wasn't SYNCON '79 chairtwit and that Peter Toluzzi was. If it comes to that, I told you the same thing at UNICON.

(JF: Your 'In reply to Paul Stevens' is disingenuous: you devote 16 lines of your contribution in the December APPLESAUCE, and if you haven't sent a copy to Paul, I guess that would qualify as the sort of behind-the-back comment Paul doesn't applaud. I was told lots of things about SYNCON '79 by Sydney fans at UNICON IV - for example, that Robert Anson Heinlein had agreed to be Guest of Honour - but times change, and there's nothing like having it in print.)

Where did the DUFF rule against having been overseas before appear?

It wasn't a rule prior to 1978 (or Shayne's nomination couldn't have been accepted). Did Bill agree to it?

What counts as 'having been overseas'? Are people ineligible who have been to Britain? New Zealand? Tasmania?

What is 'overseas' from North America?

I have gone on record before, but let me do so again. The sole qualifications for being eligible for DUFF should be to be an active fan and obtain suitable nominations. The voting fan are well able to choose whom they consider the best available ambassador. (Probably we should include NO AWARD on the list.) I'd go along with the 'at least one year's standing' bit, maybe even extend it. But I don't believe I'd recognize anyone as an active fan who hadn't been around at least that long. (Shayne McCormack hasn't yet recognized me as a full-fledged fan yet, dammit!)

(JF: I strongly support your last paragraph.)

Perry Middlemiss

The most interesting item in this issue (no 10) concerns the ruminations of yourself and Paul Stevens about DUFF. In all my time in fandom, which admittedly isn't very long, I don't believe that I have ever seen a copy of the rules and regulations covering DUFF. The problem I find is that if I intend to nominate someone for DUFF how can I know if the person I am nominating is actually eligible? I have heard a couple of quite different versions of the rule which states the eligibility of a nominee if that person has been overseas previously.

I would greatly appreciate it if you or someone involved in the administration of the fund could publish those rules. Maybe a rundown of the history of the fund, as well as the history of TAFF, may get more people involved. I am certain that there are many people who read Chunder! and know next to nothing about the fund.

(JF: Yeah, see their letters above. Oh well, maybe we should have an Answerman column in Chunder! To get to the point, however, we present

*** DUFF 1980 - THE DINKUM OIL a statement by Paul Stevens, DUFFA ***

Despite rumours to the contrary DUFF for 1979 will be on. This means that an American fan will be attending the Australian National Convention in Sydney in August 1979. At the moment I have not heard from the other side of the pond (i.e. the American Administrator) just who will be standing but no doubt this will be advised in due course. The American DUFF winner will be the official Guest of the Australian National Science Fiction Convention and apart from Sydney it is hoped that he or she will visit both Melbourne and Adelaide also. Forms for voting will be distributed just as soon as possible.

Nominations for the Australian DUFF race are now open and will close at Easter 1979. Voting will commence at that date and will close at Easter 1980. The winner will travel to the 1980 World Science Fiction Convention in Boston, August/September 1980. To be eligible to stand for nomination the candidate must have been active in Australian fandom for at least 36 months and must be nominated by three Australian fans and two Americans. Candidates must post a \$5 bond with the administrator and provide a written platform of 100 words. In the spirit of fair play it is suggested that fans who have already been overseas to a Worldcon should not nominate.

It is also to be noted that the DUFF administrators are now attempting to give more time to candidates for vote-gathering and fund-raising. It is expected that when the voting period for the 1980 Australian candidate closes at Easter 1980 the voting period for the 1981 American candidate to Australia will commence thus giving all DUFF candidates a full twelve-month period of voting.

Fundraising : The administrator would like to thank those fans who have given him their time and trouble in raising funds for DUFF and asks that 1979 see an increase in these activities. Books, posters and salable items are need to be auctioned off for DUFF and items and cash donations can be sent to Paul J Stevens, c/o SPACE AGE BOOKS, 305 Swanston St, Melbourne, Victoria 3000.

Comments on DUFF from interested fans are accepted and all correspondence will be entered into.

JF: Yeah, I have a question: what are/were the opening and closing dates for nomination of American fans to come to Sydney in August '79, and what is the associated fundraising period?

PEOPLE NOOZ

The original plan was to waltz straight in to the DITMAR DEBATE, but I need a rest, even if you don't.

Lee Harding was pleased to learn that his ABC radio serial will be repeated in 1979 - and he has been asked to write another one as well. Rob Gerrand, part creator of a board game called FINALS FEVER (based on Australian Rules football) which has brought in quite a tidy sum since its release earlier in the year, has now produced NIGHT CRICKET (a sell-out to WSC, of course) which might just keep him in caviar for another couple of months. David Lake's story in ENVISAGED WORLDS has, according to an informed source, been selected for a Don Wollheim World's Best anthology. Space Age Books, by the time you read this, will have a genuine art gallery upstairs. John Ryan wrote the introduction to the collection of Ginger Meggs strips currently on sale at your friendly neighbourhood whatever. A source in The Trade tells me that the cover price is holding back some customers. And Del & Dennis Stocks are

CHUNDER! volume 2, number 11, December 19, 1978: page 11

presently enjoying a brief California holiday - they'll be dropping in on some fans. They are both studying at University (Del in Psychology, Dennis in History) - and Dennis seems to be finding improved conditions at work. He mentions a STAR TREK con in Brisbane being billed as BRISBANE'S FIRST CONVENTION - a shock to those who attended any of the three Q-CONS: what do you say there, Judy B.? And Roy Ferguson is in England at the moment. Warren Nicholls and Margaret Mackey have announced their engagement. A sale of duplicate books could be in the offing.

Two new magazines appeared in Melbourne in the past 10 days: OMNI (out of PENTHOUSE) and DESTINIES (out of ACE). The monthly OMNI will be at a considerable advantage over the bimonthly DESTINIES in AUSTRALIA as compared with elsewhere: OMNI is \$2 in the US and \$2.55 in Australia, while DESTINIES is \$1.95 in the US and \$2.95 in Australia. The SSFF is conducting a 'favourites' Poll - see the enclosure.

=====

THE DITMARS - an exchange of letters

=====

Blair Ramage, 13 Attunga Ave, Earlwood, NSW 2206

Dear John,

How are we destroying the tradition of a decade with the 'Ditmar' categories? Three of the four categories have been in existence for 10 years and the fourth category ("Best Australian Fan Writer") is one which I think should have been on the ballot long ago.

As far as a report on the progress of the 'Ditmars' is concerned, here goes.

Nominations received Best Australian Fiction (7), Best International Fiction (4), Best Australian Fanzine (6), Best Australian Fan Writer (10), William Atheling Award (3).

At the moment we have not received any nominations from interstate, but of course it is early days yet. If people who do not have nomination forms wish to nominate they can send me a letter at the address at the top of this letter including their name and address and any nominations which they might want to make for any of the awards (please include as much information as possible with your nominations).

We (The Awards Sub-committee) intend to publish a full list of all nominations at the end of December or early in January. We would be happy to supply you with a copy to circulate in Chunder! (the same goes for Merv and ASFN of course!)

I hope that the above helps to satisfy your desire for information on the 'Ditmars'. Please feel free to circulate it as widely as possible.
Blair S. Ramage

John Foyster, GPO Box 4039, Melbourne, Vic 3001, December 3, 1978

Dear Blair,

Thanks for your letter about the Ditmars (undated, but postmarked November 29), which I found surprising. I must admit that you surprised me by stating that only the four 'standard' categories would be used by SYNCON '79. I was so surprised that I asked Bruce Gillespie what he understood the current position to be with respect to the Ditmars for next year. Like me, he believed that you were canvassing opinion. Like me, he probably takes seriously the many statements coming out of Sydney advocating more than four awards - for example, Peter Toluzzi's letter in the latest (October '78) AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE FICTION NEWS. Since Peter is chairman of SYNCON '79, I sort of gave his opinion plenty of weight. You have yourself, quite reasonably, pretty much restricted yourself to reporting the views of others, which is eminently proper. Anyway, we were clearly mistaken, and are pleased to admit the mistake. I assume that the reason for your encouragement of public discussion is to make some recommendations to people at SYNCON '79 regarding categories in future (but in that case I would have thought that someone else could have handled that side

CHUNDER! volume 2, number 11, December 19, 1978: page 12

of the Ditmar discussion, since it won't affect what you are doing in handling the awards for SYNCON '79).

However, I have trouble with the rest of your letter. I don't know, for example, what the numbers are in the table - the number of different people who have nominated in each category, or the number of people/items which have been nominated in each category. But this is a minor matter.

Blair, I thought it was the Sydney people (individually and collectively) who complained long and loud about the handling of the Ditmars by the UNICON IV people. I thought the complaint was that because the ballots were not mailed out in time, you could not get votes in easily. As you may have picked up from my comments on DUFF, I regard the nomination process as being at least as important as the voting process: unless people have the right to nominate, their vote is reduced to one amongst someone else's idea of what is best: good heavens, we might as well, if we are not to be allowed to nominate, sit back and be satisfied with results as unsatisfactory as those we rack up every few years in Federal and State parliaments. If the only nominations for 'Best Aust. Fanzine' were DOCTOR DETERRENT and PAGE OF PENTACLES (to pick two names at random) what happens to all the foolish fans who think that some other fanzine is better? They can write in a title, but the other fanzines would be at a considerable disadvantage.

No, Blair, I think nominating forms should be widely distributed throughout fandom, not just to a few of your mates in Sydney, and I don't think that your letter gives enough information. Could you let me know - the date on which nominations close, the categories for which nominations are being accepted and the conditions of eligibility for each, and the dates of eligibility? If necessary, I'll knock up a nomination form for the next Chunder! By the way, I'm interested to see that you already have so many nominations: did the final date for eligibility pass some time ago, or are the nominators ignoring any materials appearing in the last month or so of the year?

If your reply to this arrives in time, I'll run it in the next Chunder! together with this letter and the letter of yours which gave rise to it.
Regards, and see you at UNICON 5

Copies: Peter Toluzzi, Bruce Gillespie

• • • • •

There has been no reply to my letter (as of 16/12/78) but the December FORERUNNER which Jack Herman sent to me in an envelope postmarked 13/12 reveals that the categories mentioned in Blair's letter are the Ditmar categories and that the period of eligibility is 'basically' 1978. More detail, such as a closing date, would have been welcome. You don't have to be a member of SYNCON '79 to nominate, so send your nominations to Blair Ramage at the address on page 11.

.....

The amount of space given to these discussions is, in many ways, unjustifiable. But I have argued to myself that there is some value in having a protracted and public discussion of these issues. Readers of Chunder! are as entitled as I am to find the subjects boring, and for that reason there won't be anything about either the Ditmars or DUFF in the next Chunder! except for possible entirely new matters. As a result of the above garbage, there is once again no review section - books and fanzines - in this issue. Whatever distress this may cause readers, it is greater for me: the pile builds up even higher, and the task of reviewing becomes more formidable. In addition letters from Chas Jensen, James Styles and a few others have been held over, and Irwin Hirsh and some of those from whose letters extracts have appeared here will find more scraps in the next Chunder!, four weeks from now. While waiting for that issue, why not fill in the questionnaires circulated with this issue?

CHUNDER!POLL: 1978

This poll is intended to recognise the efforts of Australian fans in a number of categories: nominations, referring to activity in the 1978 calendar year, must reach John Foyster, GPO Box 4039, Melbourne, V3001 by January 31, 1979. Voting ballots will be distributed by the end of February. You may nominate up to three persons/items in each category. Type, or write legibly.

[illegible]

CHUNDER! SURVEY Number 1.

Several years ago I surveyed a convention-full of fans on their opinions of various convention items. It's time to do it again. I think things may have changed since then.

I have listed below most of the kinds of program items to be found at Australian science fiction conventions. Please rank these from best to worst, using '1' for the kind of item you like best, '2' for the kind you like next, etc.. Use 'other' when needed. Ties are permitted.

```

.... art show
.... author panels
.... slide show
.... interviews (SF)
.... fan panels (SF
oriented)
.... other (specify)
.... other (specify)
.... auction
.... movies
.... masquerade
.... interviews (fannish)...
.... fan panels (fan
oriented)
.... business meeting
.... speeches about SF
.... speeches about science
.... Paul Stevens show
.... simulation games

```

What is the single most important thing a convention committee must do to produce the kind of convention you like best?

(please return to John Foyster, GPO Box 4039, Melbourne ~~V~~3001 by 31/1/79)

THE SYDNEY SCIENCE FICTION FOUNDATION SF SURVEY

Please fill in and return to

Jack R Herman
29 Moira Cres
Randwick, NSW 2031

Please fill in (IN RANK ORDER)

1. TEN FAVOURITE (BEST) SF AUTHORS (SF/FANTASY)

1	6
2	7
3	8
4	9
5	10

2 TEN FAVOURITE SF NOVELS

1	6
2	7
3	8
4	9
5	10

3 TEN FAVOURITE SF STORIES (SHORT FICTION)

1	6
2	7
3	8
4	9
5	10

4 FIVE BEST ALL-TIME STORIES (SF/FANTASY)

1	4
2	5
3	

5 TEN BEST FANTASY NOVELS

1	6
2	7
3	8
4	9
5	10

PLEASE RETURN TO JACK HERMAN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

PUT YOUR NAME HERE

.....

AND TRY AN ADDRESS

.....

.....

.....

GUFF FUNNDIES THREE

Circulated six-weekly (or something like that) as a newsletter of GUFF activity from Leigh Edmonds, PO Box 103, Brunswick, Victoria 3056, AUSTRALIA.

FUNDS: Carey Handfield, who is as sharp eyed as ever, has reminded me that I forgot to mention last time the exact grand total that we had raised so far at that time. Silly me! Unfortunately I've now forgotten the amount of money we had in the bank at that stage but I can tell you that we have now the grand sum of \$391.30. It is a figure I am quite pleased with. Thanks go to Bev Monger and the crew at a function held for GUFF who raised \$89.90, the people at the SSFF Xmas meeting who raised \$36.85 at another auction, Roman Mazurak who donated \$40.00 and Chris Prie & and Carey Handfield who gave another \$30. Other people gave lesser amounts - every little bit is welcome.

In the UK we apparently have near enough to \$200 in whatever form it passes as genuine coin of the realm.

So we have apparently a sum close enough to \$500 so far saved up, a goodly sum but still a bit short of the almost \$900 which is our minimum total.

WHAT THEY ARE DOING IN BRITAIN: The UK administrator of GUFF, Dave Langford, always makes me feel guilty with the number of activities he dreams up to raise support - both financial and moral - for GUFF. He publishes a newssheet for GUFF called "The Northern Guffblower" which is generally twice as long as The GUFF Funndies and five times more informative and enjoyable to read. Such is the way of the world, some fans have the knack while others...

One thing Dave does in the most recent issue is to comment on my suggestion that a GUFF winner might like to fly over to the US of A as well since it is so close to Europe - Dave comments "Being down there obviously gives you a strange view of geography..." to which I can only reply that in my atlas the US looks fairly close to Britain, a lot closer than we are anyhow. Be that as it may, the possibility of the GUFF winner heading to the USA as well seems fairly remote and one of the candidates has told me that Europe is even closer to Britain than the US and he was thinking to visit there instead at no vast expense. Perhaps others might like to think along the same lines.

RAISING FUNDS: Because it is the season of good cheer and that sort of thing I have to admit that my mind has slightly drifted from its all-important goal of raising money for GUFF. I have been asked about the possibility of a postal auction by a gent who has plenty to offer but I am lazy to the extent that I don't think that we will have one of those for GUFF. Instead, as previously outlined, I hope to have two big in-person auctions early next year to raise the bulk of the money yet needed. I will be holding auctions at WAYCON in Western Australia at the beginning of March and a special GUFF auction at EASTERCON next easter. I would also like to see an auction held in Sydney at UNICON I next Australia Day holiday but since I don't expect to be there I will have to leave that in other generous hands.

GREETINGS FOR THE FESTIVE SEASON - and happy hangover.